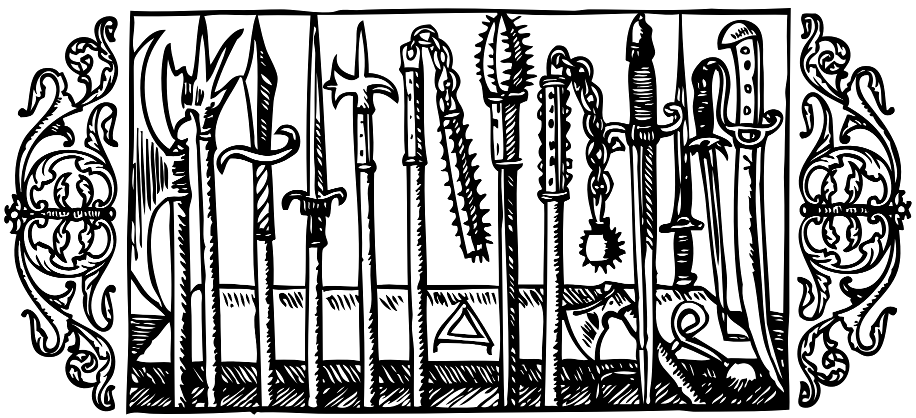
DO IT YOURSELF

Don't break up the global aspect of play by reducing it to roles.

Defend your right to enjoy life. Obstruct capital's death project. The latter can only enter the world of creativity and play by transforming who is playing into a 'player' the living creator into a dead person who cheats themselves into believing they are alive.

Alfredo M. Bonanno



ARMED JOY

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Forward everyone! And with arms and heart, word and pen, dagger and gun, irony and curse, theft, poisoning and arson, let's make... war on society!...
Dejaque

XI

Let's be done with waiting, doubts, dreams of social peace, little compromises and naivety. All metaphorical rubbish supplied to us in the shops of capitalism. Let's put aside the great analyses that explain everything down to the most minute detail. Huge volumes filled with common sense and fear. Let's put aside democratic and bourgeois illusions of discussion and dialogue, debate and assembly and the enlightened capabilities of the Mafiosi bosses. Let's put aside the wisdom that the bourgeois work ethic has dug into our hearts. Let's put aside the centuries of Christianity that have educated us to sacrifice and obedience. Let's put aside priests, bosses, revolutionary leaders, less revolutionary ones and those who aren't revolutionary at all. Let's put aside numbers, illusions of quantity, the laws of the market. Let us sit for a moment on the ruins of the history of the persecuted, and reflect.

The world does not belong to us. If it has a master who is stupid-enough to want it the way it is, let him have it. Let him count the ruins in the place of buildings, the graveyards in the place of cities, the mud in the place of rivers and the putrid sludge in the place of seas.

The greatest conjuring trick in the world no longer enchants us.

We are certain that communities of joy will emerge from our struggle here and now.

And for the first time life will triumph over death.

INTRODUCTION

This book was written in 1977 in the momentum of the revolutionary struggles taking place in Italy at the time, and that situation, now profoundly different, should be borne in mind when reading it today.

The revolutionary movement including the anarchist one was in a developing phase and anything seemed possible, even a generalisation of the armed clash.

But it was necessary to protect oneself from the danger of specialisation and militarisation that a restricted minority of militants intended to impose on the tens of thousands of comrades who were struggling with every possible means against repression and against the State's attempt—rather weak to tell the truth—to reorganise the management of capital.

That was the situation in Italy, but something similar was taking place in Germany, France, Great Britain and elsewhere.

It seemed essential to prevent the many actions carried out against the men and structures of power by comrades each day from being drawn into the planned logic of an armed party such as the Red Brigades in Italy.

That is the spirit of the book. To show how a practice of liberation and dstruction can come forth from a joyful logic of struggle, not a mortal, schematic rigidity within the pre-established canons of a directing group.

Some of these problems no longer exist. They have been solved by the hard lessons of history. The collapse of real socialism suddenly redimensioned the directing ambitions of Marxists of every tendency for good. On the other hand it has not extinguished, but possibly inflamed, the desire for freedom and anarchist communism that is spreading everywhere especially among the young generations, in many cases without having recourse to the traditional symbols of anarchism, its slogans and theories also considered with an understandable but not sharable gut refusal to be affected with ideology.

This book has become topical again, but in a different way. Not as a critique of a heavy monopolising structure that no longer exists, but because it can point out the potent capabilities of the individual on his or her road, with joy, to the destruction of all that which oppresses and regulates them.

tacular form of capitalism. And if the refusal of all that, the choice of joy in the face of death, is a sign of madness it is time everyone began to understand the trap that lurks beneath it all.

The whole apparatus of the western cultural tradition is a death machine, the negation of reality, a reign of the fictitious that has accumulated every kind of infamy and injustice, exploitation and genocide. If the refusal of this logic is condemned as madness, then we must distinguish between madness and madness.

Joy is arming itself. Its attack is overcoming the commodity hallucination, machinery, vengeance, the leader; the party, quantity. Its struggle is breaking down the logic of profit, the architecture of the market, the programming of life, the last document in the last archive. Its violent explosion is overturning the order of dependency, the nomenclature of positive and negative, the code of the commodity illusion.

But all this must be able to communicate itself. The passage from the world of joy to the world of death is not easy. The codes are out of phase and end up wiping each other out. What is considered illusion in the world of joy is reality in the world of death and vice versa. Physical death, so much a preoccupation in the death world, is less mortifying than what is peddled as life.

Hence capital's capacity to mystify messages of joy. Even revolutionaries of the quantitative logic are incapable of understanding experiences of joy in depth. Sometimes they hesitantly make insignificant approaches. At other times they let themselves go with condemnation that is not very different to that of capital.

In the commodity spectacle it is goods that count. The active element of this accumulated mass is work. Nothing can be positive and negative at the same time within the framework of production. It is possible to assert non-work, not the negation of work but its temporary suspension. In the same way it is possible to assert the non-commodity, the personalised object, but only in the context of 'free time', i.e. something that is produced as a hobby, in the time lapses conceded by the productive cycle. In this sense it is clear that these concepts, non-work and the non-commodity, are functional to the general model of production.

Only by clarifying the meaning of joy and the corresponding meaning of death as components of two opposing worlds struggling against each other is it possible to communicate elements of the actions of joy. Without illuding ourselves that we can communicate all of them. Anyone who begins to experience joy even in a perspective not directly linked to the attack on capital is more willing to grasp the significance of the attack, at least more than those who remain tied to an outdated vision of the clash based on the illusion of quantity.

So the owl could still take wing and fly.

level. On the basis of this code public opinion will get used to seeing those who attack the bosses' order of things, that is to say revolutionaries, as practically mad. Hence the need to have them put away in mental asylums. Prisons are also rationalising along the German model. First they will transform themselves into special prisons for revolutionaries, then into model prisons, then into real concentration camps for brain manipulation, and finally, mental asylums.

Capital's behaviour is not dictated by the need to defend itself from the struggles of the exploited alone. It is dictated by the logic of the code of commodity production.

For capital the asylum is a place where the globality of spectacular functioning is interrupted. Prison desperately tries to do this but does not succeed, blocked as it is by its basic ideology of social orthopaedics.

The 'place' of the asylum, on the contrary, does not have a beginning or an end, it has no history, does not have the mutability of the spectacle. It is the place of silence.

The other 'place' of silence, the graveyard, has the faculty to speak aloud. Dead men talk. And our dead talk loudly. They can be heavy, very heavy. That is why capital will try to have fewer and fewer of them. And the number of 'guests' in asylums will increase correspondingly. The 'homeland of socialism' has much to impart in this field.

The asylum is the perfect therapeutic rationalisation of free time, the suspension of work without trauma to the commodity structure. Lack of productivity without denial of it. The madman does not have to work and in not doing so he confirms that work is wisdom the opposite of madness.

When we say the time is not ripe for an armed attack on the State we are pushing open the doors of the mental asylum for the comrades who are carrying out such attacks; when we say it is not the time for revolution we are tightening the cords of the straightjacket; when we say these actions are objectively a provocation we don the white coats of the torturers.

When the number of opponents was inconsiderable, grape-shot was effective. A dozen dead can be tolerated. Thirty thousand, a hundred thousand, two hundred thousand would mark a turning point in history, a revolutionary point of reference of such blinding luminosity as to disrupt the peaceful harmony of the commodity spectacle. Besides, capital is more cunning. Drugs have a neutrality that bullets do not possess. They have the alibi of being therapeutic.

May capital's statute of madness be thrown in its face. Society is one immense mental asylum. May the terms of the counter-positions be overturned.

The neutralisation of the individual is a constant practice in capital's reified totality. The flattening of opinions is a therapeutic process, a death machine. Production cannot take place without this flattening in the spec-

Before ending I should mention that the book was ordered to be destroyed in Italy. The Italian Supreme Court ordered it to be burned. All the libraries who had a copy received a circular from the Home Ministry ordering its incineration. More than one librarian refused to burn the book, considering such a practice to be worthy of the Nazis or the Inquisition, but by law the volume cannot be consulted. For the same reason the book cannot be distributed legally in Italy and many comrades had copies confiscated during a vast wave of raids carried out for that purpose.

I was sentenced to eighteen months' prison for writing this book.

Alfredo M. Bonanno
Catania, 14 July 1993

no precise aim, devoid of reality. And this is so because the essence, the aims and reality of capital are illusory, while the essence, aims and reality of revolution are concrete.

The code of the need for communism takes the place of the code of the need to produce. In the light of this need in the community of play, the decisions of the individual become meaningful. The unreal illusory character of the death models of the past is discovered.

The destruction of the bosses means the destruction of commodities, and the destruction of commodities means the destruction of the bosses.

The owl takes flight.
Athenian proverb

X

"The owl takes flight". May actions that start off badly come to a good end. May the revolution, put off by revolutionaries for so long, be realised in spite of the latter's residual desire for social peace.

Capital will give the last word to the white coats. Prisons will not last for long. Fortresses of a past that survives only in the fantasies of some exalted old reactionary, they will disappear along with the ideology based on social orthopaedics. There will no longer be convicts. The criminalisation capital creates will be rationalised, it will be processed through asylums.

When the whole of reality is spectacular, to refuse the spectacle means to be outside reality. Anyone who refuses the code of commodities is mad. Refusal to bow down before the commodity god will result in one's being committed to a mental asylum.

There the treatment will be radical. No more inquisitorial-style torture or blood on the walls; such things upset public opinion. They cause the self-righteous to intervene, give rise to justification and making amends, and disturb the harmony of the spectacle. The total annihilation of the personality, considered to be the only radical cure for sick minds, does not upset anyone. So long as the man in the street feels he is surrounded by the imperturbable atmosphere of the capitalist spectacle he will feel safe from the asylum doors ever slamming shut on him. The world of madness will seem to him to be elsewhere, even though there is always an asylum available next to every factory, opposite every school, behind every patch of land, in the middle of every housing estate.

In our critical obtuseness we must take care not to pave the way to the civil servants in white coats.

Capital is programming a code of interpretation to be circulated at mass

of part of the commodity spectacle through mythical and mythisized objects.

Capital makes its final effort when faced with armed struggle. It engages itself on its last frontier It needs the support of public opinion in order to act in a field where it is not too sure of itself. So it unleashes a psychological war using the most refined weapons of modern propaganda.

Basically, the way capital is physically organised at the present time makes it vulnerable to any revolutionary structure capable of deciding its own timing and means of attack. It is quite aware of this weakness and is taking measures to compensate for it. The police are not enough. Not even the army. It requires constant vigilance by the people themselves. Even the most humble part of the proletariat. So, to do this it must divide the class front. It must spread the myth of the danger of armed organisations among the poor; along with that of the sanctity of the State, morality, the law and so on.

It indirectly pushes these organisations and their militants into assuming precise roles. Once in this 'role', play no longer has any meaning. Everything becomes 'serious', so illusory; it enters the domain of the spectacular and becomes a commodity. Joy becomes 'mask.' The individual becomes anonymous, lives out their role, no longer able to distinguish between appearance and reality.

In order to break out of the magic circle of the theatricals of commodities we must refuse all roles, including that of the 'professional' revolutionary.

Armed struggle must not let itself become something professional, precisely that division of tasks that the external aspect of capitalist production wants to impose upon it.

'Do it yourself.' Don't break up the global aspect of play by reducing it to roles. Defend your right to enjoy life. Obstruct capital's death project. The latter can only enter the world of creativity and play by transforming who is playing into a 'player' the living creator into a dead person who cheats themselves into believing they are alive.

There would be no sense in talking about play any longer if the 'world of play' were to become centralised. We must foresee this possibility of capital taking up the revolutionary proposal again when we put forward our argument of 'armed joy'. And one way this could come about is through the management of the world of play from the outside. By establishing the roles of the players and the mythology of the toy.

In breaking the bonds of centralisation (the military party) one obtains the result of confusing capital's ideas, tuned as they are into the code of the spectacular productivity of the quantitative market. Action coordinated by joy is an enigma to capital. It is nothing. Something with

In Paris, 1848, the revolution was a holiday without a beginning or an end.
Bakunin

I

Why on earth did these dear children shoot Montanelli in the legs? Wouldn't it have been better to have shot him in the mouth?

Of course it would. But it would also have been heavier. More vindictive and sombre. To lame a beast like that can have a deeper, more meaningful side to it which goes beyond revenge, beyond punishing him for his responsibility, fascist journalist and bosses' lackey that he is.

To lame him forces him to limp, makes him remember. Moreover, laming is a more agreeable pastime than shooting in the mouth with pieces of brain squirting out through the eyes.

The comrade who sets off in the fog every morning and walks into the stifling atmosphere of the factory, or the office, only to see the same faces: the foreman, the timekeeper, the spy of the moment, the Stakhanovite-with-seven-children-to-support, feels the need for revolution, the struggle and the physical clash, even a mortal one. But he also wants to bring himself some joy now, right away. And he nurtures this joy in his fantasies as he walks along head down in the fog, spends hours on trains or trams, suffocates in the pointless goings on of the office or amidst the useless bolts that serve to hold the useless mechanisms of capital together.

Remunerated joy, weekends off or annual holidays paid by the boss is like paying to make love. It seems the same but there is something lacking.

Hundreds of theories pile up in books, pamphlets and revolutionary papers. We must do this, do that, see things the way this one said or that one said, because they are the true interpreters of the this or that ones of the past, those in capital letters who fill up the stifling volumes of the classics.

Even the need to keep them close at hand is all part of the liturgy. Not to have them would be a bad sign, would be suspect. It is useful to keep them handy in any case. Being heavy they could always be thrown in the face of some nuisance. Not a new, but nevertheless a healthy confirmation of the validity of the revolutionary texts of the past (and present).

There is never anything about joy in these tomes. The austerity of the cloister has nothing to envy of the atmosphere one breathes in their pages. Their authors, priests of the revolution of revenge and punishment, pass their time weighing up blame and retribution.

Moreover, these vestals in jeans have taken a vow of chastity, so they also expect and impose it. They want to be rewarded for their sacrifice. First they abandoned the comfortable surroundings of their class of origin, then they put their abilities at the disposal of the disinherited. They have grown accustomed to using words that are not their own and to putting up with dirty tablecloths and unmade beds. So, one might listen to them at least.

They dream of orderly revolutions, neatly drawn up principles, anarchy without turbulence. If things take a different turn they start screaming provocation, yelling loud enough for the police to hear them.

Revolutionaries are pious folk. The revolution is not a pious event.

I call a cat a cat
Boileau

II

We are all concerned with the revolutionary problem of how and what to produce, but nobody points out that producing is a revolutionary problem. If production is at the root of capitalist exploitation, to change the mode of production would merely change the mode of exploitation.

A cat, even if you paint it red, is still a cat.

The producer is sacred. Hands off! Sanctify his sacrifice in the name of the revolution, and les jeux sont faits.

'And what will we eat?' concerned people will ask. 'Bread and string,' say the realists, with one eye on the pot and the other on their gun. 'Ideas,' the muddling idealists state, with one eye on the book of dreams and the other on the human species.

Anyone who touches productivity has had it.

Capitalism and those fighting it sit alongside each other on the producer's corpse, but production must go on.

The critique of political economy is a rationalisation of the mode of production with the least effort (by those who enjoy the benefits of it all). Everyone else, those who suffer exploitation, must take care to see nothing is lacking. Otherwise, how would we live?

When he comes out into the light the son of darkness sees nothing, just as when he went groping around in the dark. Joy blinds him. It kills him. So he says it is a hallucination and condemns it.

The flabby fat bourgeois bask in opulent idleness. So enjoyment is sinful. That would mean sharing the same sensations as the bourgeoisie and betraying those of the producing proletariat.

The community of joy is structured in this way. It is a spontaneous way of coming into contact, fundamental for the realisation of the most profound meaning of play. Play is a communitarian act. It rarely presents itself as one isolated fact. If it does, it often contains the negative elements of psychological repression, it is not a positive acceptance of play as a creative moment of struggle.

It is the communitarian sense of play that prevents arbitrariness in choice of the significance given to the game itself. In the absence of a communitarian relationship the individual could impose their own rules and meanings that would be incomprehensible to anyone else, simply making play become a temporary suspension of the negative consequences of their individual problems (the problems of work, alienation, exploitation).

In the communitarian agreement, play is enriched by a flux of reciprocal actions. Creativity is greater when it comes from reciprocally verified liberated imaginations. Each new invention, each new possibility can be lived collectively without pre-constituted models and have a vital influence even by simply being a creative moment, even if it encounters a thousand difficulties during realisation. A traditional revolutionary organisation ends up imposing its technicians. It tends unavoidably towards technocracy. The great importance attached to the mechanical aspect of action condemns it along this road.

A revolutionary structure that seeks the moment of joy in action aimed at destroying power considers the tools used to bring about this destruction just that, means. Those who use these tools must not become slaves to them. Just as those who do not know how to use them must not become slaves to those who do.

The dictatorship of tools is the worst kind of dictatorship.

Revolutionaries' most important weapons are their determination, their conscience, their decision to act, their individuality. Arms themselves are merely tools, and as such should continually be submitted to critical evaluation. It is necessary to develop a critique of arms. Too often we have seen the sanctification of the sub machine-gun and military efficiency.

Armed struggle does not concern weapons alone. These on their own cannot represent the revolutionary dimension. It is dangerous to reduce complex reality to one single thing. In fact, play involves this risk. It could make the living experience become no more than a toy, turning it into something magical and absolute. It is not by chance that the machine-gun appears in the symbolism of many revolutionary combatant organisations.

We must go beyond this in order to understand joy as the profound significance of the revolutionary struggle, escaping the illusions and traps

Do it yourself.
'Bricoleur' Manual

IX

It's easy. You can do it yourself. Alone or with a few trusted comrades. Complicated means are not necessary. Not even great technical knowledge.

Capital is vulnerable. All you need is to be decided.

A load of talk has made us obtuse. It is not a question of fear. We aren't afraid, just stupidly full of prefabricated ideas we cannot break free from.

Anyone who is determined to carry out his or her deed is not a courageous person. They are simply a person who has clarified their ideas, who has realised that it is pointless to make such an effort to play the part assigned to them by capital in the performance. Fully aware, they attack with cool determination. And in doing so they realise themselves as human beings. They realise themselves in joy. The reign of death disappears before their eyes. Even if they create destruction and terror for the bosses, in their hearts and in the hearts of the exploited there is joy and calm.

Revolutionary organisations have difficulty in understanding this. They impose a model that reproduces the reality of production. The quantitative destiny of the latter prevents them from having any qualitative move to the level of the aesthetic dimension of joy. These organisations also see armed attack in a purely quantitative light. Objectives are decided in terms of a frontal clash.

In that way capital is able to control any emergency. It can even allow itself the luxury of accepting the contradictions, point out spectacular objectives, exploit the negative effects on producers in order to widen the spectacle. Capital accepts the clash in the quantitative field, because that is where it knows all the answers. It has a monopoly of the rules and produces the solutions itself.

On the contrary, the joy of the revolutionary act is contagious. It spreads like a spot of oil. Play becomes meaningful when it acts on reality. But this meaning is not crystallised in a model that governs it from above. It breaks up into a thousand meanings, all productive and unstable. The internal connections of play work themselves out in the action of attack. But the overall sense survives, the meaning that play has for those who are excluded and want to appropriate themselves of it. Those who decide to play first and those who 'observe' the liberatory consequences of the game, are essential to the game itself.

Not so. The bourgeois goes to great lengths to keep the process of exploitation going. He is stressed too and never finds time for joy. His cruises are occasions for new investments, his lovers fifth columns for getting information on competitors.

The productivity god kills even its most faithful disciples. Wrench their heads off, nothing but a deluge of rubbish will pour out.

The hungry wretch harbours feelings of revenge when he sees the rich surrounded by their fawning entourage. The enemy must be destroyed before anything else. But save the booty. Wealth must not be destroyed, it must be used. It doesn't matter what it is, what form it takes or what prospects of employment it allows. What counts is grabbing it from whoever is holding on to it at the time so that everyone has access to it.

Everyone? Of course, everyone.

And how will that happen?

With revolutionary violence.

Good answer. But really, what will we do after we have cut off so many heads we are bored with it? What will we do when there are no more landlords to be found even if we go looking for them with lanterns?

Then it will be the reign of the revolution. To each according to their needs, from each according to their possibilities.

Pay attention, comrade. There is a smell of bookkeeping here. We are talking of consumption and production. Everything is still in the dimension of productivity. Arithmetic makes you feel safe. Two and two make four. Who would dispute this 'truth'? Numbers rule the world. If they have done till now, why shouldn't they continue to?

We all need something solid and durable. Stones to build a wall to stem the impulses that start choking us. We all need objectivity. The boss swears by his wallet, the peasant by his spade, the revolutionary by his gun. Let in a glimmer of criticism and the whole scaffolding will collapse.

In its heavy objectivity, the everyday world conditions and reproduces us. We are all children of daily banality. Even when we talk of 'serious things' like revolution, our eyes are still glued to the calendar. The boss fears the revolution because it would deprive him of his wealth, the peasant will make it to get a piece of land, the revolutionary to put his theory to test.

If the problem is seen in these terms, there is no difference between wallet, land and revolutionary theory. These objects are all quite imaginary, mere mirrors of human illusion.

Only the struggle is real.

It distinguishes boss from peasant and establishes the link between the latter and the revolutionary.

The forms of organisation production takes are ideological vehicles to conceal illusory individual identity. This identity is projected into the illusory economic concept of value. A code establishes its interpretation. The bosses control part of this code, as we see in consumerism. The technology of psychological warfare and total repression also gives its contribution to strengthening the idea that one is human on condition that one produces.

Other parts of the code can be modified. They cannot undergo revolutionary change but are simply adjusted from time to time. Think, for example, of the mass consumerism that has taken the place of the luxury consumerism of years gone by.

Then there are more refined forms such as the selfmanaged control of production. Another component of the code of exploitation.

And so on. Anyone who decides to organise my life for me can never be my comrade. If they try to justify this with the excuse that someone must 'produce' otherwise we will all lose our identity as human beings and be overcome by 'wild, savage nature', we reply that the man-nature relationship is a product of the enlightened Marxist bourgeoisie. Why did they want to turn a sword into a pitchfork? Why must man continually strive to distinguish himself from nature?

Men, if they cannot attain what is necessary,
tire themselves with that which is useless.
Goethe

III

Man needs many things.

This statement is usually taken to mean that man has needs which he is obliged to satisfy.

In this way people are transformed from historically determined units into a duality (means and end simultaneously). They realise themselves through the satisfaction of their needs (i.e. through work) so become the instrument of their own realisation.

Anyone can see how much mythology is concealed in statements such as this. If man distinguishes himself from nature through work, how can he fulfil himself in the satisfaction of his needs? To do this he would already have become 'man', so have fulfilled his needs, which means he would not have to work.

at the source not downstream at the feet of those who come out into the streets, poised to make them stumble. They exist in the centuries of systematic violence that capital has exercised over the exploited. But they do not necessarily come to light in a form that is complete and ready for use. That would be a further rationalisation of intentions, our dream of imposing a model on reality that does not belong to it.

Let's have these Cossacks come down. We do not support the role of reaction, that is not for us. We refuse to accept capital's ambiguous invitation. Rather than shoot our comrades or each other it is always better to shoot policemen.

There are times in history when science exists in the consciousness of those who are struggling. At such times there is no need for interpreters of truth. It emerges from things as they are. It is the reality of the struggle that produces theory.

The birth of the commodity market marked the formation of capital, the passage from feudal forms of production to the capitalist one. With the entrance of production into its spectacular phase the commodity form has extended to everything that exists: love, science, feelings, consciousness, etc. The spectacle has widened. The second phase does not, as the marxists maintain, constitute a corruption of the first. It is a different phase altogether. Capital devours everything, even the revolution. If the latter does not break from the model of production, if it merely claims to impose alternative forms, capitalism will swallow it up within the commodity spectacle.

Only the struggle cannot be swallowed up. Some of its forms, crystallising in precise organisational entities.,can end up being drawn into the spectacle. But when they break away from the deep significance that capital gives to production this becomes extremely difficult.

In the second phase questions of arithmetic and revenge do not make sense. If they are mentioned, they take on a metaphorical significance.

The illusory game of capital (the commodity spectacle) must be substituted with the real game of the armed attack against it for the destruction of the unreal and the spectacle.

There will be no revolution until the Cossacks descend.
Coeurderoy

VIII

Play is also enigmatic and contradictory in the logic of capital, which uses it as part of the commodity spectacle. It acquires an ambiguity that it does not in itself possess. This ambiguity comes from the illusory structure of capitalist production. In this way the game simply becomes a suspension of production, a parenthesis of 'peace' in everyday life. So play comes to be programmed and used scenically.

When it is outside the dominion of capital, play is harmoniously structured by its own creative impulse. It is not linked to this or that performance required by the forces of the world of production but develops autonomously. It is only in this reality that play is cheerful, that it gives joy. It does not 'suspend' the unhappiness of the laceration caused by exploitation but realises it to the full, making it become a participant in the reality of life. In this way it opposes itself to the tricks put into act by the reality of death—even through play—to make the gloominess less gloomy.

The destroyers of the death reality are struggling against the mythical reign of capitalist illusion, a reign which although it aspires to eternity rolls in the dust of the contingent. Joy emerges from the play of destructive action, from the recognition of the profound tragedy that this implies and an awareness of the strength of enthusiasm that is capable of slaying the cobwebs of death. It is not a question of opposing horror with horror, tragedy with tragedy, death with death. It is a confrontation between joy and horror, joy and tragedy, joy and death.

To kill a policeman it is not necessary to don the judge's robes hastily cleansed of the blood of previous sentences. Courts and sentences are always part of the spectacle of capital, even when it is revolutionaries who act them out. When a policeman is killed his responsibility is not weighed on the scales, the clash does not become a question of arithmetic. One is not programming a vision of the relationship between revolutionary movement and exploiters. One is responding at the immediate level to a need that has come to be structured within the revolutionary movement, a need that all the analyses and justifications of this world would never have succeeded in imposing on their own.

This need is the attack on the enemy, the exploiters and their servants. It matures slowly within the structures of the movement. Only when it comes out into the open does the movement pass from the defensive phase to attack. Analysis and moral justification are upstream

Commodities have a profoundly symbolic content. They become a point of reference, a unit of measure, an exchange value. The spectacle begins. Roles are cast and reproduce themselves to infinity. The actors continue to play their parts without any particular modifications.

The satisfaction of needs becomes no more than a reflex, marginal effect. What matters is the transformation of people into 'things' and everything else along with them. Nature becomes a 'thing'. Used, it is corrupted and man's vital instincts along with it. An abyss gapes open between nature and man. It must be filled, and the expansion of the commodity market is seeing to it. The spectacle is expanding to the point of devouring itself along with its contradictions. Stage and audience enter the same dimension, proposing themselves for a higher; more far-reaching level of the same spectacle, and so on to infinity.

Anyone who escapes the commodity code does not become objectified and falls 'outside' the area of the spectacle. They are pointed at. They are surrounded by barbed wire. If they refuse englobement or an alternative form of codification, they are criminalized. They are clearly mad! It is forbidden to refuse the illusory in a world that has based reality on illusion, concreteness on the unreal.

Capital manages the spectacle according to the laws of accumulation. But nothing can be accumulated to infinity. Not even capital. A quantitative process in absolute is an illusion, a quantitative illusion to be precise. The bosses understand this perfectly. Exploitation adopts different forms and ideological models precisely to ensure this accumulation in qualitatively different ways, as it cannot continue in the quantitative aspect indefinitely.

The fact that the whole process becomes paradoxical and illusory does not matter much to capital, because it is precisely that which holds the reins and makes the rules. If it has to sell illusion for reality and that makes money, then let's just carry on without asking too many questions. It is the exploited who foot the bill. So it is up to them to see the trick and worry about recognising reality. For capital things are fine as they are, even though they are based upon the greatest conjuring show in the world.

The exploited almost feel nostalgia for this swindle. They have grown accustomed to their chains and have become attached to them. Now and then they have fantasies about fascinating uprisings and blood baths, then they let themselves be taken in by the speeches of the new political leaders. The revolutionary party extends capital's illusory perspective to horizons it could never reach on its own. The quantitative illusion spreads.

The exploited join up, count themselves, draw their conclusions. Fierce slogans make bourgeois hearts miss a beat. The greater the number,

the more the leaders prance around arrogantly and the more demanding they become. They draw up great programmes for the conquest of power. This new power prepares to spread out on the remains of the old. Bonaparte's soul smiles in satisfaction.

Of course, deep changes are being programmed in the code of illusions. But everything must be submitted to the symbol of quantitative accumulation. The demands of the revolution increase as militant forces grow. In the same way the rate of the social profit that is taking the place of private profit must grow. So capital enters a new, illusory, spectacular, phase. Old needs press on insistently under new labels. The productivity god continues to rule, unrivalled.

How good it is to count ourselves. It makes us feel strong. The unions count themselves. The parties count themselves. The bosses count themselves. So do we. Ring a ring o' roses.

And when we stop counting we try to ensure that things stay as they are. If change cannot be avoided, we will bring it about without disturbing anyone. Ghosts are easily penetrated.

Every now and then politics come to the fore. Capital often invents ingenious solutions. Then social peace hits us. The silence of the graveyard. The illusion spreads to such an extent that the spectacle absorbs nearly all the available forces. Not a sound. Then the defects and monotony of the mis-en-scene. The curtain rises on unforeseen situations. The capitalist machinery begins to falter. Revolutionary. involvement is rediscovered. It happened in '68. Everyone's eyes nearly fell out of their sockets. Everyone extremely ferocious. Leaflets everywhere. Mountains of leaflets and pamphlets and papers and books. Old ideological differences lined up like tin soldiers. Even the anarchists rediscovered themselves. And they did so historically, according to the needs of the moment. Everyone was quite dull-witted. The anarchists too. Some people woke up from their spectacular slumber and, looking around for space and air to breathe, seeing anarchists said to themselves, At last! Here's who I want to be with. They soon realised their mistake. Things did not go as they should have done in that direction either. There too, stupidity and spectacle. And so they ran away. They closed up in themselves. They fell apart. Accepted capital's game. And if they didn't accept it they were banished, even by the anarchists.

The machinery of '68 produced the best civil servants of the new techno-bureaucratic State. But it also produced its antibodies. The process of quantitative illusion became evident. On the one hand it received fresh lymph to build a new view of the commodity spectacle, on the other there was a flaw.

It has become blatantly obvious that confrontation at the level of production is ineffective. Take over the factories, and fields, and schools

that direction. They take form suddenly, with only the minimum strategic orientation necessary. No frills, no long analytical premises, no complex supporting theories. They attack. Comrades identify with these structures. They reject the organisations that give power, equilibrium, waiting, death. Their action is a critique of the wait-and-see suicidal positions of these organisations. Anathema! There must have been a provocation.

There is a break away from traditional political models which is becoming a critique of the movement itself. Irony becomes a weapon. Not closed within a writer's study, but en masse, in the streets. Not only the bosses' servants but also revolutionary leaders from a far off and recent past are finding themselves in difficulty as a result. The mentality of the small-time boss and leading group is also put in crisis. Anathema! The only legitimate critique is that against the bosses, and it must comply with the rules laid down by the historical tradition of the class struggle. Anyone who strays from the seminary is a provocateur.

People are tired of meetings, the classics, pointless marches, theoretical discussions that split hairs in four; endless distinctions, the monotony and poverty of certain political analyses. They prefer to make love, smoke, listen to music, go for walks, sleep, laugh, play, kill policemen, lame journalists, kill judges, blow up barracks. Anathema! The struggle is only legitimate when it is comprehensible to the leaders of the revolution. Otherwise, there being a risk that the situation might get beyond their control, there must have been a provocation.

Hurry comrade, shoot the policeman, the judge, the boss. Now, before a new police prevent you.

Hurry to say No, before the new repression convinces you that saying no is pointless, mad, and that you should accept the hospitality of the mental asylum.

Hurry to attack capital before a new ideology makes it sacred to you.

Hurry to refuse work before some new sophist tells you yet again that 'work makes you free".

Hurry to play. Hurry to arm yourself.

The same is happening with the unemployed and the casual labourers. Stimulated by boredom and alienation, structures are emerging on the basis of self-organisation. The introduction of aims programmed and imposed by an outside organisation would kill the movement and consign it to the commodity spectacle.

Most of us are tied to this idea of revolutionary organisation. Even anarchists, who refuse authoritarian organisation, do not disdain it. On this basis we all accept the idea that the contradictory reality of capital can be attacked with similar means. We do so because we are convinced that these means are legitimate, emerging as they do from the same field of struggle as capital. We refuse to admit that not everyone might see things the way we do. Our theory is identical to the practice and strategy of our organisations.

The differences between the authoritarians and ourselves are many, but they all collapse before a common faith in the historical organisation. Anarchy will be reached through the work of these organisations (substantial differences only appear in methods of approach). But this faith indicates something very important: the claim of our whole rationalist culture to explain reality in progressive terms. This culture bases itself on the idea that history is irreversible, along with that of the analytical capacity of science. All this makes us see the present as the point where all the efforts of the past meet the culminating point of the struggle against the powers of darkness (capitalist exploitation). Consequently, we are convinced that we are more advanced than our predecessors, capable of elaborating and putting into practice theories and organisational strategies that are the sum of all the experiences of the past.

All those who reject this interpretation automatically find themselves beyond reality, which is by definition history, progress and science. Whoever refuses such a reality is anti-historical anti-progressive and anti-scientific. Sentenced without appeal.

Strengthened by this ideological armour we go out into the streets. Here we run into the reality of a struggle that is structured quite differently, from stimuli that do not enter the framework of our analyses. One fine morning during a peaceful demonstration the police start shooting. The structure reacts, comrades shoot too, policemen fall. Anathema! It was a peaceful demonstration. For it to have degenerated into individual guerrilla actions there must have been a provocation. Nothing can go beyond the perfect framework of our ideological organisation as it is not just a 'part' of reality, but is 'all' reality. Anything beyond it is madness and provocation. Supermarkets are destroyed, shops and food and arms depots are looted, luxury cars are burned. It is an attack on the commodity spectacle in its most conspicuous forms. The new structures are moving in

and neighbourhoods and selfmanage them, the old revolutionary anarchists proclaimed. We will destroy power in all its forms, they added. But without getting to the roots of the problem. Although conscious of its gravity and extent, they preferred to ignore it, putting their hopes in the creative spontaneity of the revolution. But in the meantime they wanted to maintain control of production. Whatever happens, whatever creative forms the revolution might express, we must take over the means of production they insisted. Otherwise the enemy will defeat us at that level. So they began to accept all kinds of compromise. They ended up creating another; even more macabre, spectacle.

And spectacular illusion has its own rules. Anyone who wants to direct it must abide by them. They must know and apply them, swear by them. The first is that production affects everything. If you do not produce you are not a man, the revolution is not for you. Why should we tolerate parasites? Should we go to work in place of them perhaps? Should we see to their livelihood as well as our own? Besides, wouldn't all these people with vague ideas and a claim to doing as they please not turn out to be 'objectively' useful to the counterrevolution? Well, in that case better attack them right away. We know who our allies are, whom we want to side with. If we want to scare, then let's do it all together, organised and in perfect order, and may no one put their feet on the table or let their trousers down.

Let's organise our specific organisations. Train militants who know the techniques of struggle at the place of production. The producers will make the revolution, we will only be there to make sure they don't do anything silly.

No, that's all wrong. How will we be able to stop them from making mistakes? At the spectacular level of organisation there are some who are capable of making far more noise than we are. And they have breath to spare. Struggle at the workplace. Struggle for the defence of jobs. Struggle for production.

When will we break out of the circle? When will we stop biting our tails?

The deformed man always finds mirrors that make him handsome.
de Sade

IV

What madness the love of work is!

With great scenic skill capital has succeeded in making the exploited love exploitation, the hanged man the rope and the slave his chains.

This idealisation of work has been the death of the revolution until now. The movement of the exploited has been corrupted by the bourgeois morality of production which is not only foreign to it, it is also contrary to it. It is no accident that the trade unions were the first sector to be corrupted, precisely because of their closer proximity to the management of the spectacle of production.

It is time to oppose the non-work aesthetic to the work ethic.

We must counter the satisfaction of spectacular needs imposed by consumer society with the satisfaction of man's natural needs seen in the light of that primary, essential need: the need for communism.

In this way the quantitative evaluation of needs is overturned. The need for communism transforms all other needs and their pressures on man.

Man's poverty, the consequence of exploitation, has been seen as the foundation of future redemption. Christianity and revolutionary movements have walked hand in hand throughout history. We must suffer in order to conquer paradise or to acquire the class consciousness that will take us to revolution. Without the work ethic the Marxist notion of 'proletariat' would not make sense. But the work ethic is a product of the same bourgeois rationalism that allowed the bourgeoisie to conquer power.

Corporatism resurfaces through the mesh of proletarian internationalism. Everyone struggles within their own sector. At most they contact similar ones in other countries, through the unions. The monolithic multinationals are opposed by monolithic international unions. Let's make the revolution but save the machinery, the working tool, that mythical object that reproduces the historical virtue of the bourgeoisie, now in the hands of the proletariat.

Then there is the revolutionary movement where there is no lack of those who attack the power of capital verbally. These people cause a great deal of confusion. They come out with grand statements but no longer impress anyone, least of all capital which cunningly uses them for the most delicate part of its spectacle. When it needs a soloist it puts one of these performers on stage. The result is pitiful.

The truth is that the spectacular mechanism of commodities must be broken by entering the domain of capital, its coordinating centres, right to the very nucleus of production. Think what a marvellous explosion of joy, what a great creative leap forward, what an extraordinarily aimless aim.

Only it is difficult to enter the mechanisms of capital joyfully, with the symbols of life. Armed struggle is often a symbol of death. Not because it gives death to the bosses and their servants, but because it wants to impose the structures of the dominion of death itself. Conceived differently it really would be joy in action, capable of breaking the structural conditions imposed by the commodity spectacle such as the military party, the conquest of power; the vanguard.

This is the other enemy of the revolutionary movement. Incomprehension. Refusal to see the new conditions of the conflict. The insistence on imposing models of the past that have now become part of the commodity spectacle.

Ignorance of the new revolutionary reality is leading to a lack of theoretical and strategic awareness of the revolutionary capacity of the movement itself. And it is not enough to say that there are enemies so close at hand as to make it indispensable to intervene right away without looking at questions of a theoretical nature. All this hides the incapacity to face the new reality of the movement and avoid the mistakes of the past that have serious consequences in the present. And this refusal nourishes all kinds of rationalist political illusions.

Categories such as revenge, leaders, parties, the vanguard, quantitative growth, only mean something in the dimension of this society, and such a meaning favours the perpetuation of power. When you look at things from a revolutionary point of view, i.e. the complete definitive elimination of all power; these categories become meaningless.

By moving into the nowhere of utopia, upsetting the work ethic, turning it into the here and now of joy in realisation, we find ourselves within a structure that is far from the historical forms of organisation.

This structure changes continually, so escapes crystallisation. It is characterised by the self-organisation of producers at the workplace, and the self-organisation of the struggle against work. Not the taking over of the means of production, but the refusal of production through organisational forms that are constantly changing.

Life is so boring there is nothing to do except spend all our wages on the latest skirt or shirt. Brothers and Sisters, what are your real desires? Sit in the drugstore, look distant, empty, bored, drinking some tasteless coffee? Or perhaps BLOW IT UP OR BURN IT DOWN.

The Angry Brigade

VII

The great spectacle of capital has swallowed us all up to our necks. Actors and spectators in turn. We alternate the roles, either staring open-mouthed at others or making others stare at us. We have alighted the glass coach, even though we know it is only a pumpkin. The fairy godmother's spell has beguiled our critical awareness. Now we must play the game. Until midnight, at least.

Poverty and hunger are still the driving forces of the revolution. But capital is widening the spectacle. It wants new actors on stage. The greatest spectacle in the world will continue to surprise us. Always more complicated, better and better organised. New clowns are getting ready to mount the rostrum. New species of wild beasts will be tamed.

The supporters of quantity, lovers of arithmetic, will be first on and will be blinded by the limelight, dragging the masses of necessity and the ideologies of redemption along behind them.

But one thing they will not be able to get rid of is their seriousness. The greatest danger they face will be a laugh. In the spectacle of capital, joy is deadly. Everything is gloomy and funereal, everything is serious and orderly, everything is rational and programmed, precisely because it is all false and illusory.

Beyond the crises, beyond other problems of underdevelopment, beyond poverty and hunger, the last fight that capital will have to put up, the decisive one, is the fight against boredom.

The revolutionary movement will also have to fight its battles. Not just the traditional ones against capital but new ones, against itself. Boredom is attacking it from within, is causing it to deteriorate, making it asphyxiating, uninhabitable.

Let us leave those who like the spectacle of capitalism alone. Those who are quite happy to play their parts to the end. These people think that reforms really can change things. But this is more an ideological cover than anything else. They know only too well that changing bits is one of the rules of the system. It is useful to capital to have things fixed a little at a time.

The heir to the revolution is destined to become the consumer and main actor of the capitalist spectacle of tomorrow. Idealised at the level of the clash as the beneficiary of its outcome, the revolutionary class disappears in the idealisation of production. When the exploited come to be enclosed within a class all the elements of the spectacular already exist, just as they do for the class of exploiters.

The only way for the exploited to escape the globalising project of capital is through the refusal of work, production and political economy.

But refusal of work must not be confused with 'lack of work' in a society which is based on the latter. The marginalised look for work. They do not find it. They are pushed into ghettos. They are criminalised. Then that all becomes part of the management of the productive spectacle as a whole. Producers and unemployed are equally indispensable to capital. But the balance is a delicate one. Contradictions explode and produce various kinds of crisis, and it is in this context that revolutionary intervention takes place.

So, the refusal of work, the destruction of work, is an affirmation of the need for non-work The affirmation that man can reproduce and objectify himself in non-work through the various solicitations that this stimulates in him. The idea of destroying work is absurd if it is seen from the point of view of the work ethic. But how? So many people are looking for work, so many unemployed, and you talk about destroying work? The Luddite ghost appears and puts all the revolutionaries-who-have-read-all-the-classics to fright. The rigid model of the frontal attack on capitalist forces must not be touched. All the failures and suffering of the past are irrelevant; so is the shame and betrayal. Ahead comrades, better days will come, onwards again!

It would suffice to show what the concept of 'free time', a temporary suspension of work, is bogged down in today to scare proletarians back into the stagnant atmosphere of the class organisations (parties, unions and hangers-on). The spectacle offered by the bureaucratic leisure organisations is deliberately designed to depress even the most fertile imagination. But this is no more than an ideological cover, one of the many instruments of the total war that make up the spectacle as a whole.

The need for communism transforms everything. Through the need for communism the need for non-work moves from the negative aspect (opposition to work) to the positive one: the individual's complete availability to themselves, the possibility to express themselves absolutely freely, breaking away from all models, even those considered to be fundamental and indispensable, such as those of production.

But revolutionaries are dutiful people and are afraid to break with all models, not least that of revolution which constitutes an obstacle to the full realisation of what the concept means. They are afraid they might

find themselves without a role in life. Have you ever met a revolutionary without a revolutionary project? A project that is well defined and presented clearly to the masses? Whatever kind of revolutionary would be one who claimed to destroy the model, the wrapping, the very foundations of the revolution? By attacking concepts such as quantification, class, project, model, historical task and other such old stuff, one would run the risk of having nothing to do, of being obliged to act in reality, modestly, like everyone else. Like millions of others who are building the revolution day by day without waiting for signs of a fatal deadline. And to do this you need courage.

With rigid models and little quantitative games you remain within the realm of the unreal, the illusory project of the revolution, an amplification of the spectacle of capital.

By abolishing the ethic of production you enter revolutionary reality directly.

It is difficult even to talk about such things because it does not make sense to mention them in the pages of a treatise. To reduce these problems to a complete and final analysis would be to miss the point. The best thing would be an informal discussion capable of bringing about the subtle magic of wordplay.

It is a real contradiction to talk of joy seriously.

No real joy can reach us from the rational mechanism of capitalist exploitation. Joy does not have fixed rules to catalogue it. Even so, we must be able to desire joy. Otherwise we would be lost.

The search for joy is therefore an act of will, a firm refusal of the fixed conditions of capital and its values. The first of these refusals is that of work as a value. The search for joy can only come about through the search for play.

So, play means something different to what we are used to considering it to be in the dimension of capital. Like serene idleness, the play that opposes itself to the responsibilities of life is an artificial, distorted image of what it really is. At the present stage of the clash and the relative constrictions in the struggle against capital play is not a 'pastime' but a weapon.

By a strange twist of irony the roles are reversed. If life is something serious death is an illusion in the sense that so long as we are alive death does not exist. Now, the reign of death, i.e. the reign of capital, which denies our very existence as human beings and reduces us to 'things', seems very serious, methodical and disciplined. But its possessive paroxysm, its ethical rigorousness, its obsession with 'doing' all hide a great illusion: the total emptiness of the commodity spectacle, the uselessness of indefinite accumulation and the absurdity of exploitation. So the great seriousness of the world of work and productivity hides a total lack of seriousness.

On the contrary, the refusal of this stupid world, the pursuit of joy, dreams, utopia in its declared 'lack of seriousness', hides the most serious thing in life: the refusal of death.

In the physical confrontation with capital play can take different forms even on this side of the fence. Many things can be done 'playfully' yet most of the things we do, we do very 'seriously' wearing the death mask we have borrowed from capital.

Play is characterised by a vital impulse that is always new, always in movement. By acting as though we are playing, we charge our action with this impulse. We free ourselves from death. Play makes us feel alive. It gives us the excitement of life. In the other model of acting we do everything as though it were a duty, as though we 'had' to do it.

It is in the ever new excitement of play, quite the opposite to the alienation and madness of capital, that we are able to identify joy.

Here lies the possibility to break with the old world and identify with new aims and other values and needs. Even if joy cannot be considered man's aim, it is undoubtedly the privileged dimension that makes the clash with capital different when it is pursued deliberately.

The concept of the selfmanagement of production is valid only as a form of struggle against capitalism, in fact it cannot be separated from the idea of the selfmanagement of the struggle. If the struggle is extinguished, selfmanagement becomes nothing other than self-management of one's exploitation. If the struggle is victorious the selfmanagement of production becomes superfluous, because after the revolution the organisation of production is superfluous and counter-revolutionary.

So long as you make the throw yourself everything is skill and easy winning; only if you suddenly become the one catching the ball that the eternal playmate throws at you, at your centre, with all her strength in one of those arcs of great divine bridge builders: only then is being able to catch strength, not yours but of a world.
Rilke

VI

We all believe we have experienced joy. Every single one of us believes we have been happy at least once in our lives.

Only this experience of joy has always been passive. We happen to enjoy ourselves. We cannot 'desire' joy just as we cannot oblige joy to present itself when we want it to.

All this separation between ourselves and joy depends on our being 'separate' from ourselves, divided in two by the process of exploitation.

We work all the year round to have the 'joy' of holidays. When these come round we feel 'obliged' to 'enjoy' the fact that we are on holiday. A form of torture like any other. The same goes for Sundays. A dreadful day. The rarefaction of the illusion of free time shows us the emptiness of the mercantile spectacle we are living in.

The same empty gaze alights on the half empty glass, the TV screen, the football match, the heroin dose, the cinema screen, traffic jams, neon lights, prefabricated homes that have completed the killing of the landscape.

To seek 'joy' in the depths of any of the various "recitals' of the capitalist spectacle would be pure madness. But that is exactly what capital wants. The experience of free time programmed by our exploiters is lethal. It makes you want to go to work. To apparent life one ends up preferring certain death.

Summer nights are heavy. One sleeps badly in tiny rooms. It is the Eve of the Guillotine.
Zo d'Axa

V

The exploited also find time to play. But their play is not joy. It is a macabre ritual. An awaiting death. A suspension of work in order to lighten the pressure of the violence accumulated during the activity of production. In the illusory world of commodities, play is also an illusion. We imagine we are playing, while all we are really doing is monotonously repeating the roles assigned to us by capital.

When we become conscious of the process of exploitation the first thing we feel is a sense of revenge, the last is joy. Liberation is seen as setting right a balance that has been upset by the wickedness of capitalism, not as the coming of a world of play to take the place of the world of work.

This is the first phase of the attack on the bosses. The phase of immediate awareness. What strikes us are the chains, the whip, the prison walls, sexual and racial barriers. Everything must come down. So we arm ourselves and strike the adversary to make them pay for their responsibility.

During the night of the guillotine the foundations for a new spectacle are laid. Capital regains strength: first the bosses' heads fall, then those of the revolutionaries.

It is impossible to make the revolution with the guillotine alone. Revenge is the antechamber of power. Anyone who wants to avenge themselves requires a leader. A leader to take them to victory and restore wounded justice. And whoever cries for vengeance wants to come into possession of what has been taken away from them. Right to the supreme abstraction, the appropriation of surplus value.

The world of the future must be one where everyone works. Fine! So we will have imposed slavery on everyone with the exception of those who make it function and who, precisely for that reason, become the new bosses.

No matter what, the bosses must 'pay' for their wrongs. Very well! We will carry the Christian ethic of sin, judgement and reparation into the revolution. As well as the concepts of 'debt' and 'payment', clearly of mercantile origins.

That is all part of the spectacle. Even when it is not managed by power directly it can easily be taken over. Role reversal is one of the techniques of drama.

It might be necessary to attack using the arms of revenge and punishment at a certain moment in the class struggle. The movement might not possess any others. So it will be the moment for the guillotine. But revolutionaries must be aware of the limitations of such arms. They should not deceive themselves or others.

Within the paranoid framework of a rationalising machine such as capitalism the concept of the revolution of revenge can even become part of the spectacle as it continually adapts itself. The movement of production seems to come about thanks to the blessing of economic science, but in reality it is based on the illusory anthropology of the separation of tasks.

There is no joy in work, even if it is selfmanaged. The revolution cannot be reduced to a simple reorganisation of work. Not that alone. There is no joy in sacrifice, death and revenge. Just as there is no joy in counting oneself. Arithmetic is the negation of joy.

Anyone who desires to live does not produce death. A transitory acceptance of the guillotine leads to its institutionalisation. But at the same time, anyone who loves life does not embrace their exploiter. To do so would signify that they are against life in favour of sacrifice, self-punishment, work and death.

In the graveyard of work centuries of exploitation have accumulated a huge mountain of revenge. The leaders of the revolution sit upon this mountain, impassively. They study the best way to draw profit from it. So the spur of revenge must be addressed against the interests of the new caste in power. Symbols and flags. Slogans and complicated analyses. The ideological apparatus does everything that is necessary.

It is the work ethic that makes this possible. Anyone who delights in work and wants to take over the means of production does not want things to go ahead blindly. They know by experience that the bosses have had a strong organisation on their side in order to make exploitation work. They think that just as strong and perfect an organisation will make liberation possible. Do everything in your power, productivity must be saved at all costs.

What a swindle! The work ethic is the Christian ethic of sacrifice, the bosses' ethic thanks to which the massacres of history have succeeded each other with worrying regularity.

These people cannot comprehend that it would be possible not to produce any surplus value, and that one could also refuse to do so. That it is possible to assert one's will not to produce, thus struggle against both the bosses' economic structures and the ideological ones that permeate the whole of Western thought.

It is essential to understand that the work ethic is the foundation of the quantitative revolutionary project. Arguments against work would be senseless if they were made by revolutionary organisations with their logic of quantitative growth.

The substitution of the work ethic with the aesthetic of joy would not mean an end to life as so many worried comrades would have it. To the question: 'What will we eat?' one could quite simply reply: 'What we produce.' Only production would no longer be the dimension in which man determines himself, as that would come about in the sphere of play and joy. One could produce as something separate from nature, then join with it as something that is nature itself. So it would be possible to stop producing at any moment, when there is enough. Only joy will be uncontrollable. A force unknown to the civilised larvae that populate our era. A force that will multiply the creative impulse of the revolution a thousand-fold.

The social wealth of the communist world is not measured in an accumulation of surplus value, even if it turns out to be managed by a minority that calls itself the party of the proletariat. This situation reproduces power and denies the very essence of anarchy. Communist social wealth comes from the potential for life that comes after the revolution.

Qualitative, not quantitative, accumulation must substitute capitalist accumulation. The revolution of life takes the place of the merely economic revolution, productive potential takes the place of crystallised production, joy takes the place of the spectacle.

The refusal of the spectacular market of capitalist illusions will create another kind of exchange. From fictitious quantitative change to a real qualitative one. Circulation of goods will not base itself on objects and their illusionist reification, but on the meaning that the objects have for life. And this must be a life meaning, not a death one. So these objects will be limited to the precise moment in which they are exchanged, and their significance will vary according to the situations in which this takes place.

The same object could have profoundly different 'values'. It will be personified. Nothing to do with production as we know it now in the dimension of capital. Exchange itself will have a different meaning when seen through the refusal of unlimited production.

There is no such thing as freed labour. There is no such thing as integrated labour (manual-intellectual). What does exist is the division of labour and the sale of the workforce, i.e. the capitalist world of production. The revolution is the negation of labour and the affirmation of joy. Any attempt to impose the idea of work, 'fair work', work without exploitation, 'self-managed' work where the exploited are to re-appropriate themselves of the whole of the productive process without exploitation, is a mystification.